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ABSTRACT

The process of developing and implementing the Graduate Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) at Seattle Pacific University (Washington) included five steps: initial conception, establishment of program parameters, development of a working proposal, completion of the review process, and completion of the adoption process. Graduate STEP is a 2-year graduate secondary teacher certification program designed to prepare bilingual teachers, with diverse ethnic and language backgrounds, for positions in Seattle Public Schools. The program grew, in part, from a desire on the part of Seattle Public Schools bilingual education instructional assistants to receive college credit for inservice training, credit that could be applied to teacher certification. Program participants have bachelor's degrees, some from U.S. colleges and some from the students' native countries. In addition to describing the 5-step process of development and implementation, this paper outlines the student recruitment campaign and the faculty recruitment and preparation campaign. Most students in the program are immigrants for whom English is a second language; their original languages include several Asian and African languages. Several recommendations derived from program planning and implementation experience are made. (IAH)

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DEVELOPMENT OF THE GRADUATE SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM AT SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

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The presentation which follows is a description of the process involved in moving the Graduate STEP program from conception to implementation. Other participants have presented a review of the literature and a sense of the history of the need for the program. The intent of this presentation will be to provide a picture of the tasks of the actual development process and to summarize what Seattle Pacific has learned from the process to date as a way of assisting other institutions which might be considering similar programs.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The design of the Graduate STEP program involved 5 steps: Initial conception, establishment of program parameters, development of a working proposal, completion of the review process, and completion of the official adoption process.

Initial Conception

What became the Graduate STEP program began as an agreement that Seattle Pacific University would provide inservice training to elementary and secondary instructional assistants working with the Transitional Bilingual Education office of the Seattle Public Schools. Participants in the program became interested in receiving college credit for their training which would apply to teacher certification. As it became evident that the elementary program would be more difficult to convert,

discussion centered on a secondary certification program. The vision of the program was further modified by the knowledge that state mandates would require graduates of the program to complete a masters degree to receive continuing certification, and by the knowledge that a number of our sister institutions in the state were developing Master of Arts in Teaching programs. Since our operating description for students admitted to the program required a bachelors degree, the ultimate decision was to develop and seek funding support for a teacher certification program which would apply to and be compatible with a MAT degree.

Establishment of Program Parameters

Once the working description of the program was in place, the second step in the program design process was that of establishing its parameters. One of the real challenges of teacher certification program development is that of attempting to give a new program a unique and convincing "voice" while at the same time acknowledging the concerns and requirements of multiple audiences for such programs. In terms of voice, the Graduate STEP program provided a unique opportunity to encourage participants to become practitioner/leaders. It provided an chance to build on the maturity and professional experience of the projected audience in the development of a program which would balance their need for immediate teaching skills, with their potential for thoughtfulness and leadership in building-level decision-making.

The Seattle Public Schools and Security Pacific Bank formed a partnership with the University in the development of the Graduate STEP program. Faculty from Seattle Pacific consulted, and continue to consult, with staff of the Transitional Bilingual Education Program of the Seattle Public Schools in regard to the general structure of the program, in regard to the specific needs of its instructional assistants, and in regard to potential adjunct faculty and scholarship committee members. The University took seriously the school district's concern that sensitivity to diverse populations be infused through the curriculum, and that the program make qualitative judgements about the actual success of participants in program courses as well as likely success in teaching.

The willingness of Security Pacific Bank to contribute $200,000 over four years to underwrite the program enabled the program to begin and guaranteed seven full scholarships each year. The text of the grant it agreed to fund was an important reference document in the development of the program, and an officer of the bank serves on the scholarship committee.

The unique nature of the program required it to address three audiences: the external professional audience, the internal faculty audience, and the ultimate student audience.

The External Professional Audience. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction was and continues to be an important external audience for all teacher certification programs, including requirements regarding content and program

evaluation. For example, in regard to content the OSPI publishes an outline of knowledge and experiences which must be a part of all programs for teachers certified in Washington State. The state also mandates a Professional Education Advisory Board (PEAB) for each teacher education program which is asked to review the degree to which that institution's teacher certification programs comply with the state standards. The membership of the PEAB includes representatives of the state associations for teachers, school administrators, and school board members, who also function as an external professional audience interested in the nature of teacher education programs.

NCATE is another audience whose expectations were addressed in the development of the program, particularly in the area of recruitment and admissions policy. The NCATE compliance criterion regarding recruitment of applicants from diverse economic, racial, and cultural backgrounds received careful attention in program development, as did the criterion calling for use of alternative admissions criteria. NCATE endorsement of these characteristics as part of an acceptable teacher certification program were also helpful in dealing with some concerns on the part of School of Education faculty about Graduate STEP admissions policy.

The Internal Faculty Audience. Graduate STEP was the first graduate teacher certification program at the university. The hybrid nature of the program almost automatically dictated a tension between the focus of the undergraduate program on practice and application, and the focus of the graduate program

on research and general principles. While most of the questions the faculty asked about Graduate STEP were based on perceptions about the nature of the needs of Graduate STEP students, some of the questions appeared to arise from the hope that traditional programs could survive the demands external forces are making on teacher education. Because the Graduate STEP program is the first new teacher certification program the university has had for many years, it is the first which has been asked to address evolving perceptions about teacher education without the benefit of its own program history.

The Ultimate Student Audience. The ongoing attempt to address the needs of the Graduate STEP program participants was and continues to be one of the most stimulating and challenging tasks of the program. As conceived, the program was to address the needs of bilingual instructional assistants in the Seattle Public Schools who had already completed a bachelors degree. For most of the proposed audience, English was a second language. First languages included Ethiopian Amharic, Mandarin Chinese, Laotian, and Tagalog. Some of the projected participants had completed their undergraduate degrees in North American universities; others received their degrees in Taiwan, Thailand, or Mainland China. Some had extensive experience in public high schools in the United States; others had experience in the home country but limited experience in working with American students. In addition, we knew that after admitting all qualified applicants for a particular year who closely matched the description of the target audience, some program spaces would

still be available for program participants who were interested in the program, but did not fit the description of the target audience. The current cadre, for example, includes a Phi Beta Kappa English major, a paid docent with the Pacific Science Center who has done science education consulting in Eastern Europe, and a native English speaker fluent in Russian. The diversity of this group called for a program design in which the choice of courses, selection and training of faculty, and choice of teaching strategies all acknowledged and attempted to address difference.

Development of a Working Proposal

The development of the working proposal began with the process of outlining a program which attempted to strike a balance between meeting the non-negotiable criteria (OSPI requirements, for example) and as many elements as possible of the vision for the program. The constraints of OSPI standards were a significant factor and a sometime frustration in that they left little room for the kind of rethinking that new programs sometimes allow. The outline was presented to the various audiences for comments and suggestions in a variety of settings: representatives of the graduate programs held a weekend retreat; representatives of the Seattle Public Schools met to review the initial outline at a series of luncheons and in a series of letters; members of the undergraduate program (in their traditional teacher-certification role) met in a day-long retreat

to consider the program; the state-mandated Professional Education Advisory Board heard a presentation regarding the program and made suggestions. Based upon the concerns and suggestions of these groups, the program outline was modified and prepared for adoption.

Completion of the Adoption Process

The willingness to consult and inform in advance appeared to be a significant factor in the success of the adoption process. Both the graduate committee, made up of program chairs and faculty in the graduate program, and the School of Education curriculum committee, made up of all fulltime faculty, gave their approval to the program when it was presented to them. Faculty commented at the time that they felt they were giving formal approval to a program they had already seen and accepted during the working proposal stage. At the same time, the case could be made that the approval process was made easier by the fact that the program was perceived by undergraduate faculty as basically a graduate program, and by graduate faculty as basically a teacher certification, and therefore undergraduate, program.

As adopted, the program for fully qualified applicants included 47 quarter credits of coursework spread over two years. With the exception of site-based experiences, all courses are offered in the evening or summer(see Graduate STEP program description for additional information).

STUDENT RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

The campaign to recruit students into the program was guided by the knowledge that seven scholarship positions were available in the first year and that the program needed twenty students to be viable. The School of Education worked with a writer, layout specialist, and photographer in the publications office of University Relations to develop a press release, program pamphlet, program description and guidelines, program application, and scholarship application. The publications office created a logo and unified appearance for program paper. Although the initial version of the pamphlet reflected the University's, belief that the program would attract a mixture of applicants, the Seattle schools strongly wanted the text and photographs in the pamphlet to be directed strictly to their instructional assistants. A University representative and a Seattle Schools representative worked together to modify the pamphlet which was eventually distributed to Seattle Schools personnel and to those who inquired as a result of newspaper and other media coverage of the program.

Program admissions criteria were developed to include both teacher certification criteria and graduate program criteria, but with clear communication of a willingness to consider modification of criteria for strong candidates. Applicants must submit passing scores in mathematics, writing and spelling tests required of applicants to the teacher certification program, and submit satisfactory scores on either the GRE or the Miller

Analogies Test. The reason for including graduate criteria was to smooth the transition between the Graduate STEP stage of the program and the proposed MAT stage. Initial screening of applicants was done by the University Office of Admissions. They made sure admissions packets were complete, that qualifying examinations had been taken, and that foreign university degrees were equivalent. The teacher certification advisor in the School of Education evaluated transcripts and documented whether applicants were eligible for endorsement in traditional secondary teaching disciplines. In addition, applicants were individually interviewed by a faculty committee. Applicants for next year for whom English is a second language will be asked to take the TOEFL test and a test of spoken English. Once applicants were admitted to the program by the faculty committee, the applications of those who had applied for scholarships were submitted to the scholarship committee.

The scholarship committee included representatives of the diverse populations community recommended by the Seattle Public Schools, and Seattle Pacific University diverse populations personnel. The committee also included other appropriate, interested people such as the director of the international student program. The development of the scholarship application form and process followed much the same route as that for program development: initial conversations, development of prototypes, discussion of prototypes and development and adoption of final models. The actual selection process involved two steps. In the first step, scholarship committee members were asked to

rank applicants on the basis of the criteria. At this point, committee members were encouraged to discuss the results of the initial ranking, to "champion" particular applicants if they chose, and to raise issues for other committee members to consider. When this process was completed, committee members were asked to rank the applicants for a second, and final, time. Scholarships were awarded to the applicants with the seven highest average ranks.

FACULTY RECRUITMENT AND PREPARATION

The faculty for the Graduate STEP program is a combination of resident and adjunct faculty. To the extent that the program has used existing courses, those courses are being taught by their usual faculty members. New courses are being developed and taught both by resident and adjunct faculty. Faculty preparation has taken a number of forms. All resident faculty, whether involved in the program or not, received training in working with diverse populations students during an autumn retreat. In some cases, faculty involved in the program have received load credit for receiving training and doing course development. Others are undertaking the training and course development process through a package of small grants awarded to the program by the University. This grants package calls for partnerships between resident faculty and diverse populations adjuncts in the development of new courses. The intent of the grants is to increase resident faculty knowledge of and sensitivity to diverse populations

concerns, to develop a pool of diverse populations adjuncts to enrich the teaching in the School of Education, and to induct those adjuncts into the conventions of university teaching.

PROGRAM CONCLUSIONS

Initial reaction to the Graduate STEP program has been quite good. The prospect of placing bright new diverse populations teachers in Seattle classrooms is a stimulating one. Seeing the program through to implementation has been a tremendous opportunity for growth and learning for everyone involved. We've learned that we need to:

1. Challenge perceived constraints in the program design process. The external constraints placed upon new program designs has been a significant though not insurmountable challenge to innovation. The opportunity to petition OSPI policy is being considered in Washington State. Such an opportunity would be of significant benefit to programs like Graduate STEP.

2. Make personal contact and conversation an important element of relationships between the school district and the university. The development of personal trust relationships has proven an important supplement to the more traditional development of policies and program descriptions as ways of encouraging smooth program operation.

3. Build a significant orientation element into the program design. Particularly for students whose undergraduate degrees are from outside the United States, the tasks of registration, writing the first academic paper, and participating in class discussion are new experiences. Students in the program have a

strong work ethic, but they need orientation to the University and to the conventions of graduate study in the United States.

4. Consult with other international programs. While there were no teacher certification programs similar to ours in the Seattle area, Seattle Pacific benefitted from conversations with sister institutions with experience in dealing with international graduate students in other disciplines.

5. Make personal empowerment a goal of the program. For students who are used to unqualified acceptance or silent distrust of authority, it is important for the orientation element of the program to teach them how to use university procedures for good-faith challenges to university policy. For students who are accustomed to recording and repeating facts they've gathered from books or lectures, it is important for classes to provide students with opportunity for stating and defending their own ideas.

6. Err on the side of initial oversensitivity to diverse populations concerns. Most schools of education have limited experience in working with teacher candidates for whom English is a second language. The potential for misunderstanding decreases as programs and instructors allow a additional margin. Our experience has been that if students feel accepted, they will begin to tell instructors not only when they need more consideration, but also when their growing confidence and ability convince them they need less.

7. Maintain a vision for the program. There is a temptation to retreat entirely to tradition, or pragmatism, or to the hopes

of a particular constituency in defining or revising programs of this type. Experience at Seattle Pacific suggests that program quality and effectiveness require maintaining a creative tension among these forces.